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AUTHOR	Brown, Peggy Ann
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ABSTRACT

College and university efforts to address minority students' needs are described. The Minority Achievement Program (MAP) provided grants to selected colleges to test a range of programs and services to help certain student groups succeed in achieving their educational goals. Descriptions of 10 selected projects are provided, along with information on the school's enrollment and the amount of the award, which ranged from $2,145 to $9,000. Information is also provided on the purpose and findings of an evaluation of MAP. The evaluator, Herman Blake, considered common elements that led to success/failure of the MAP-funded activities, and based on individual projects offered conclusions on how colleges can best address minority students' needs. Four conditions that significantly affected project outcomes were identified: institutional commitment, program leadership, program conceptualization, and faculty involvement. In addition, these criteria were applied in evaluating the 10 selected projects. Six of the 10 projects were strong in all four areas. The other four projects, which had weaknesses in one or more of the four critical areas, were determined to have less successful outcomes. Recommendations for campuses and funding agencies are included. (SW)

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MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM

"The Minority Achievement Program addressed itself to issues which are deeply rooted in American society and have been developing for literally centuries.... Conceptualizing and designing programs to redress the inequities required more than desire and willingness. There had to be an intuitive understanding of the vast range of complexities involved. The MAP program was enormously successful."

J. Herman Blake, President, Tougaloo College
Evaluator, Minority Achievement Program

HELPING MINORITY STUDENTS SUCCEED

A REPORT OF THE ASSOCIATION
OF AMERICAN COLLEGES

MINORITY ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM
1981-1985

Funding for the Association of American Colleges Minority Achievement Program and the publication of this monograph was provided by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation.

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Preface

The racial and ethnic composition of the American college-going population is undergoing changes that will become dramatic within the next quarter of a century. These changes reflect the varying rates of growth of different population groups in our society. According to one projection, the nation's population will grow from 238 to 260 million in the next 35 years, and nearly all of the increase will be in minority groups because the birth rate of the majority group has fallen below the replacement level. As our colleges and universities continue to assist all students in their intellectual and personal development, the needs of minority students will demand much greater attention.

This report describes the efforts by a group of institutions who early on recognized minority students' needs and devised special means to address them. Sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and funded by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, the Minority Achievement Program was launched to assist the efforts of those institutions. Selected colleges and universities were given modest grants to test a range of programs and services to enable designated groups of students to be more successful in achieving their educational goals. In publishing this account it is our hope that other institutions will benefit from the experience gained on these campuses and be stimulated to develop their own approaches to aid the maximum achievement of the growing number of minority students.

Progress in student accomplishment generally reflects the concern and dedication of the faculty and administrators who work with them and support their efforts. That was especially true in this project. It is a pleasure to recognize the special contributions of Herman Blake to the success of this project. In addition, Jane Spalding was instrumental in working with the campuses to bring MAP to a conclusion. This report itself was ably written by Peggy Ann Brown of our staff.

John W. Chandler, President
Association of American Colleges

Introduction

In the United States today approximately 59 out of every 100 white undergraduates complete their college degrees compared to 42 black, 31 Hispanic, and 39 Native American students. Why do more minority students fail to graduate? The reasons are many, combining such factors as poor precollege preparation, few campus role models, insensitive and ill-prepared instructors, and students' feelings of alienation and isolation. In 1981 the Association of American Colleges (AAC) established the Minority Achievement Program to address these long-standing concerns.

Funded by the Sears-Roebuck Foundation, the Minority Achievement Program (MAP) awarded grants of $1,000 to $10,000 to member colleges and universities for projects that helped minority students broaden and achieve their educational goals. Between 1981 and 1984 seven grant competitions were conducted and 69 grants totaling $341,227 were given. Activities ranged from skills development and peer tutoring to faculty/professional mentoring and teacher education.

An advisory board of black, Native American, and Hispanic educators developed the MAP competition guidelines. During the first six competitions applicants were asked to propose activities that responded to the following challenges:

1. What can a postsecondary institution do to broaden the horizons of minority students and to prepare faculty and institutions to aid and encourage them in achieving their educational goals?

2. How can institutions through faculty and staff actions enable minority students to develop their human and intellectual potential to the fullest extent possible, thus improving their opportunities for leadership in satisfying and rewarding careers?

In 1984 AAC received additional funding from Sears to coordinate a final MAP competition. Three areas were designated as possible project concerns: outreach to high schools and two-year colleges, faculty and staff development, and educational opportunities for adults.

The seven competitions followed the same procedures. AAC members submitted proposals detailing project objectives, activities, outcomes, and replicability. (AAC membership includes all types of higher education institutions, from the small private liberal arts college to the large state research university.) More than 500 proposals were submitted during the three-year period. Each proposal was reviewed by a panel of minorities, including experts in minority affairs, as well as academicians. Based on the panel's recommendations, an in-house committee, consist-

ing of AAC staff and a Sears representative, made the final project selections.

In 1984 Sears funded an evaluation of the MAP projects. J. Herman Blake, then provost of Oakes College, University of California, Santa Cruz, was selected as the evaluator. Blake, who is now president of Tougaloo College, visited 14 campuses and spoke with students and staff involved with the MAP projects. The remainder of this monograph summarizes his findings and conclusions. In order to focus on the MAP activities themselves, the campuses are identified by institutional type rather than by name.

Selected Project Descriptions

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

1 *Denominational Liberal Arts College for Women with Enrollment of Approximately 1,400. Award: $5,000.*

Institution One's MAP award coincided with their recommitment to meeting minority students' needs. Located in a largely Hispanic area, the college had developed a bilingual teacher certification program for Hispanic women employed as school aides or paraprofessionals. The college requested MAP funds for a Bilingual Career Planning course that would emphasize career advancement and mobility through role models and skills assessment. Upon implementing the course, staff realized that students needed more than career exploration; to ensure student retention and success, the program was expanded to include assertiveness training, crosscultural communication skills, and study techniques.

To ease the minority women's adjustment to a majority culture institution, the staff coordinated consciousness-raising sessions that helped students focus their energies on succeeding in college rather than succumbing to feelings of insecurity. Role models continued to be an important program component, with minority professionals and upper division students participating in panel discussions, informal luncheons, and videotaped interviews. These contacts illustrated how minority women can and have overcome obstacles in their education and careers.

These efforts have become part of continuous orientation and assistance programs for Hispanic women. Additional activities include preadmission courses in reading, writing, and mathematics; learning style assessments; life/career planning; and workshops to increase faculty and other students' understanding of Hispanic culture.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

2 *School of Medicine at State University with Enrollment of Approximately 24,000. Award: $5,000.*

With the aid of MAP, Institution Two revised its ten-year-old summer program aimed at helping minority and nontraditional students prepare for their first year of medical school at a majority culture institu-

tion. In the past, staff found that less than half of the students scheduled to begin medical school in the fall attended. To make the summer session more attractive, they devised a more rigorous program that would present materials covered in fall classes and include an optional one-month preceptorship with local physicians. Eleven students attended the seven weeks of tuition-free classes.

Courses included a condensed version of biochemistry, beginning lectures and laboratories from gross anatomy, and sessions on patient interviewing and statistical procedures. Students also reviewed study skills and learned speed reading and medical terminology. To acclimate students to their new environment, staff led tours of the medical school complex, the university, and the community.

At the end of the classes, five students participated in preceptorships in which they accompanied physicians through their daily routines. They interviewed patients, took blood samples, ran laboratory tests, and assisted in operations—experiences usually not available until students' third year. The preceptorships helped students develop a personal relationship with a physician and gain a more realistic view of the medical education they were about to begin.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

3 *Independent Liberal Arts College for Women with Enrollment of Approximately 700. Award: $2,145.*

Although black students comprise 16 percent of Institution Three's total enrollment, staff were distressed that the attrition rate for minority freshmen was 50 percent. They recognized that some students were able to meet admission criteria without developing the learning strategies necessary for collegiate success. To increase minority retention, the college tested a survival skills program for traditional- and nontraditional-aged black students.

The ten-week program combined weekly lectures with individualized instruction. After an evaluation of their study skills, students began personalized programs designed to improve their reading, organizational, listening, and writing abilities. They attended weekly lectures on subjects ranging from study methods and test-taking strategies to vocabulary development and psychological factors in learning. Peer tutors offered laboratory sessions reinforcing each week's lecture topic. In addition to completing laboratory assignments, students could receive assistance with regular courses from the study skills center.

As a result of the program's success in improving students' academic abilities, the college has implemented campus-wide skills re-

quirements in such areas as reading, writing, mathematics, and speech. All students must demonstrate proficiency in these areas before being granted junior status. The evaluation and skills development activities are part of a new program which also will include community internships, career planning and placement, and continuing education assistance to local corporations.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

4 *Denominational Liberal Arts College with Enrollment of Approximately 2,000. Award: $5,000.*

Located in a city of approximately 80,000, Institution Four represents an alien culture to Native American students from nearby reservations. To combat these students' sense of loneliness and alienation (and increase their chances for academic success), the college designed activities to orient them to the college and increase the campus community's understanding of their special needs. A concurrent interest was increasing Native American enrollment, which had dropped to approximately ten percent of the student body.

Activities began with summer visits by Native American student counselors to the homes of prospective freshmen living on the reservations. The counselors, who were entering their senior year at Institution Four, answered questions about the college and registered students for fall classes. Once on campus the Native American students received additional support from tutoring and study skills programs and continued contact with their student counselors.

Because of the importance of family support to Native American students, the staff originally proposed funding travel and lodging for weekend visits from parents and siblings who could not otherwise afford the trip to campus. When repeated efforts to interest families in campus visits failed, the monies were used to help students return home for midterm holidays.

The hosting of a Native American dance competition with monetary awards for the best dancers, drew more than 1,000 people; it proved to be an effective device for bringing families and other Native Americans to campus and introducing the college to an important Indian tradition. The dance competition was staged during the college's annual conference on Indian/white relations. The conference complemented on-going campus seminars for students and faculty on Native American life.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

5 *Independent Liberal Arts College for Men with Enrollment of Approximately 800. Award: $4,000.*

After learning that few graduates from a nearby inner city high school attend college, Institution Five initiated an academic program for high potential students. Identified in eighth grade through testing and teacher recommendation, these students participate in a four-year program that combines college preparatory courses with museum visits and other enrichment activities. They visit the college for day-long sessions on various subjects, learning, for example, how the equipment available in a college laboratory corresponds to their high school biology studies. MAP funds helped support a half-time director who coordinated the cooperative activities.

The college also added a two-week summer session to the academic year program. Students attended specially-designed mathematics, science, language, writing, and social science courses team-taught by the college faculty and their high school counterparts, as well as study skills and drama workshops. Living on campus, the participants used the recreational facilities and ate in the residence halls. Professionals from various fields met with the students over dinner to discuss career choices.

This program is continuing with institutional and external funding. Future activities include establishing advisory committees at the college and the high school and stressing the parents' role in their children's academic success.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

6 *Denominational Liberal Arts College with Enrollment of Approximately 1,500. Award: $5,200.*

Despite established minority outreach programs, Institution Six has experienced difficulties recruiting and retaining minority students. Although most of these students live in the metropolitan area where the college is located, they are unprepared emotionally and academically for the culture shock engendered by a 95 percent white, traditional college environment. The institution designed a two-phase project to confront this situation.

Phase one consisted of an academic survival skills program for recent high school graduates. Originally intended for students planning to attend the college, the staff expanded the program to others when enrollment did not meet their expectations. Ten black and Native American students entered the four-week program, with eight complet-

ing the entire session. Participants received free room and board and $100 stipends. Living on campus during the week, they attended classes in creative expression, mathematics/computer awareness, and written and oral communication. Group counseling sessions featured discussions of racism and college life and presentations by minority professionals.

Because only one summer participant enrolled in Institution Six, the staff revised the project's second phase, which had proposed matching the students with faculty mentors during their freshman year. The new activity paired interested faculty members with minority students from a local high school. With guidance from their mentors, the students completed independent study projects for high school credit.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

7 *Denominational Liberal Arts College for Women with Enrollment of Approximately 1,000. Award: $5,500.*

Institution Seven established a satellite campus in an economically-disadvantaged area to reach out to black women who, although capable of college level work, lack confidence and are intimidated by traditional college settings. To complement this effort, the college used MAP funds to open a learning center that offered skills assessment and college preparatory work in reading and writing. The center also provided tutoring and individualized instruction in speed reading, grammar, and critical thinking, in addition to counseling and child care.

The learning center introduced students to the satellite campus, which offers opportunities for earning baccalaureate degrees that combine liberal arts with career-related fields. Students can earn up to 30 of the required 128 credits through documentation of prior learning experiences. Other credits are earned through independent study, specially-designed weekly seminars, and classes at the main campus. Faculty, students, and staff participate in course development.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

8 *Predominantly Black, Denominational Liberal Arts College With Enrollment of Approximately 2,200. Award: $6,000*

Institution Eight attributes its success in placing graduates in medical schools to a prefreshman year summer program for future science majors that emphasizes the development of analytical abilities. With MAP funds the college initiated a similar effort to increase the number of minority students who complete baccalaureate programs in the

humanities and social sciences and pursue graduate degrees in these areas. Thirty-two students completed the initial summer offering.

Six weeks in length, the humanities/social science program built on the experiences of its science counterpart and incorporated many of the same features. Students from both groups attended Piagetian-based laboratories in mathematics and biology, analytical reasoning and critical reading sessions, and orientation and recreational activities. In addition, the humanities/social science participants developed thinking skills applicable to history, English, and philosophy courses; they practiced testing propositions, making historical connections, and assessing value systems. Weekly quiz bowls between the science and humanities/social science students encouraged the development of reading and vocabulary skills.

Participants also explored career opportunities for humanities/social science majors, discussing law school and other graduate programs with students and professionals. After learning about word processors they wrote career essays using the machines.

The humanities/social science program is continuing with federal funding. Faculty members also have incorporated modules developed in the summer program into their regular courses.

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE:

9 *School of Medicine at Denominational University with Enrollment of Approximately 5,000. Award: $5,000*

Concerned that many minority applicants lacked the necessary skills for medical school, Institution Nine worked with a local, predominantly black, state university to improve the preparation of premedical students. Activities centered on improving the state university's basic science curriculum and helping both students and faculty better understand the demands of medical education.

The medical school professors worked in pairs with state university teachers to review curriculum and teaching approaches, develop proposals for course changes, and implement revisions. State university faculty identified potential juniors and seniors to participate in the program. Student abilities were assessed through cognitive area examinations, learning skills profiles, and an examination similar to the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). The state university established a pre-med club and assigned faculty mentors to participants. Students received MCAT manuals and attended workshops on medical careers and study and test-taking skills.

The cooperative program is continuing with internal and external funding and will be expanded to another state university. Future activities include workshops on medical school interview techniques and the strengthening of faculty ties between the various institutions.

10 INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE: *City College with Enrollment of Approximately 16,000. Award: $9,000*

Although many minority students express an early interest in science, Institution Ten discovered that they often switch majors because of inadequate preparation for such programs. Remediation courses offered in the freshman year do not provide sufficient exposure to the vocabulary, conceptual and factual scientific background, and interpretative skills needed in science courses. The college designed a six-week summer program to help prospective minority science majors improve their cognitive and quantitative skills and build their self-confidence and sense of community.

Twenty-four freshmen, recruited through advertisements, counselor and instructor referrals, and word-of-mouth, enrolled in the first program. Participants attended lectures together, breaking off into smaller groups for laboratories and tutoring sessions. Minority graduate and undergraduate students served as laboratory instructors and tutors. Courses focused on problem-solving techniques in chemistry and physics, the intepretation of graphs and tables, and how to reason from models. Students learned how college science courses are taught and what is expected in these courses.

Pre- and post-tests results reveal that the average student score increased 41 points, indicating to staff members that students made significant improvements as a result of the summer program. They were disappointed to discover that many summer participants did not do as well as expected in their academic year science courses. The staff has received federal funding to continue and modify the original program.

Evaluation Summary

In spring 1984 Herman Blake began a year-and-a-half study of the Minority Achievement Program. Known for his expertise in and commitment to minority education, Blake set out to uncover the common elements that led to the success or failure of the MAP-funded activities. His charge from the MAP Advisory Board was not only to evaluate the individual projects but to draw conclusions on how colleges and universities can best address the needs of minority students.

As an introduction to the scope of MAP activities, Blake first reviewed the files of all funded projects. These materials included each campus' original proposal, as well as reports and correspondence detailing subsequent activities. Working with the AAC staff, Blake chose 14 projects for closer examination. Selected projects represented a variety of institutional settings and target groups, including blacks, Hispanics, Native Americans, and Asians.

Blake next visited the 14 campuses, interviewing project directors, faculty members, and students. He asked specific questions about project implementation and inquired more generally about their response to the experience. He toured facilities and sat in on classes. Meetings with presidents and deans provided a sense of institutional commitment and support.

Several patterns soon emerged in the successful projects, despite differences in approach and audience. Blake identified four conditions that played a significant role in a project's outcome: institutional commitment, program leadership, program conceptualization, and faculty involvement. Projects that were strong in all four areas had the greatest chance in achieving their goals; those with weaknesses in one or more had less satisfying results.

Blake identified the four areas as follows:

Institutional commitment—the degree to which the institution's top administrators demonstrate interest and support of the project. Strong commitment produces a positive environment for all participants and communicates the project's value to other faculty and staff. A lack of commitment may signal to the wider campus community that the activity is not worthy of their support or involvement.

Program leadership—the qualities of those responsible for implementing specific project activities. Inspired and imaginative leadership can motivate students and sustain participants' interest and involvement. Poor leadership undermines even carefully designed programs.

Program conceptualization—the degree to which the project design and implementation reflect an understanding of the complexity of the problem addressed. Without this knowledge, programs tend to be "quick fixes" directed at warning signals rather than underlying concerns.

Faculty involvement—the level of faculty interest and participation in the project. Active faculty support can lead to a project's successful integration into the campus agenda and ensure its continuation.

Project Evaluations

Blake applied these criteria in his final evaluation of the ten projects presented earlier. Some further discussion of his observations can provide valuable insights for campuses considering similar activities.

Blake concluded that six of the ten projects were strong in all four areas, noting that in three instances the MAP grant gave prestige and recognition to the project and generated the necessary institutional commitment. The ability of several to secure additional external funding confirmed his findings of their long-range potential. A case in point is the survival skills program for black freshmen. This $2,145 project served as a pilot for a $400,000 effort that extends the benefits of the initial program to all students. Blake observed that the grant's small size forced staff to be very specific about how to achieve their goals, with the result that the activities produced verifiable improvement in student abilities.

The prefreshman humanities/social science program also will have a long-term institutional impact. Faculty members are incorporating the pedagogical strategies tested during the summer into ongoing classes. Blake noted that this project also showed strength in each of the four criteria.

The four-year program for high potential minority high school students also received external funding. Institutional commitment began with the president and guaranteed that funds would be pursued to keep the program in operation. The president's approval influenced faculty members, who rated the experience both personally and professionally satisfying—another measure of the necessary faculty involvement.

Other MAP projects demonstrating high levels of commitment, leadership, conceptualization, and faculty involvement were the summer session for prospective minority science majors, the orientation and support activities for Hispanic women, and the cooperative effort between the medical school and the traditionally black state university.

In the four projects which Blake determined had less successful outcomes, weaknesses existed in one or more of the four critical areas. For example, the summer program for beginning minority medical students had many positive features, according to Blake, but lacked strong institutional commitment and faculty involvement. Funding for

key elements in the program was unavailable on a regular basis, and some faculty members were critical of the program because of past experiences with similar activities. Praising the director's sensitivity and responsiveness to students, Blake maintained that the program's success could be greatly improved with the appropriate institutional support.

Also benefiting from strong leadership and conceptualization was the satellite campus learning center for black women, which Blake predicted, however, would not continue because of lack of institutional commitment and faculty involvement; the former concern demonstrated by the absence of any internal funding. The project to address Native American students' sense of isolation had little continuing impact, according to Blake. He attributed this to problems in faculty involvement, institutional commitment, and program leadership. Although the program conceptualization reflected a keen understanding of Native American culture, the actual implementation showed little realization of the effort required to carry out the project.

Blake observed that several factors indicated a lack of institutional commitment for the academic survival skills program for recent black and Native American high school graduates. These ranged from housing students in the only dormitory without air conditioning to requiring staff members to administer the project without clerical support and in addition to ongoing assignments. In addition, Blake noted that while the project leaders possessed the sensitivity and ability necessary to make the program successful, they were handicapped by the difficulty of resolving deep-rooted problems in a short amount of time.

In interviews with MAP participants, Blake gained insights and perspectives valuable for campuses considering activities to improve minority students' chances for collegiate success and for organizations interested in funding such projects. Some grew out of specific efforts while others reflect broader concerns.

Insights and Recommendations for Campuses

1. Planning and implementation always take longer than expected. Study the situation carefully to avoid addressing only superficial problems.

2. Faculty members need training and support in dealing with minority and disadvantaged students. Techniques and assumptions used with majority culture students are not necessarily applicable to other groups.

3. While small classes may provide greater opportunities for contact between individual students and instructors, their impact is greatly reduced if instruction must be directed at the least able students.

4. Balancing intensive academic sessions with recreational and enrichment activities improves student performance and helps build a supportive peer network.

5. It cannot be assumed that minorities have a natural affinity with each other; conflicts can arise between students and among students and staff members of the same or different races.

6. Peer counseling programs for minority students provide valuable role models, a sense of community support, and familiarity with someone who has faced similar problems. They also offer upper division students an opportunity to participate in a meaningful educational experience that builds their own self-confidence.

7. Contact with successful minority professionals can sustain students through difficult periods. Because some minority students have not known any black professionals personally, such contact can dispel career misconceptions.

8. Recognize that minority students may need assistance coordinating employment, transportation, and child care, in addition to help with their course work. Offer sessions on how to budget time and relieve stress.

Insights and Recommendations for Funding Agencies

1. Examine proposals for indications of strength in the four conditions identified by Blake as necessary for program success:

a. institutional commitment—internal funding, plans to continue activity past grant period, release of project staff from other assignments as appropriate, coordination with campus offices other than minority affairs
b. program leadership—managerial skills and experience, inspired and imaginative direction, ability to motivate students and serve as role model, knowledge of and sensitivity to minority students' needs and concerns
c. program conceptualization—understanding of the complexity of the problem addressed, activities appropriate to audience and problem, realistic goals
d. faculty involvement—participation by regular faculty, in addition to nonteaching staff, in planning and instructional activities

2. Coordinate meetings for project directors from different schools to discuss common concerns, share ideas, and overcome feelings of isolation.

3. The importance of early contact with high potential students cannot be overstated. Involve elementary and secondary schools in activities designed to improve students' chances for collegiate success. Precollege instructors value exchanges with their college peers and gain a new appreciation of their role in students' future.

Appendix A

MAP Project Institutions

Alverno College
Augsburg College
Augustana College
Bennett College
Bethune-Cookman College
Blackfeet Community College
Caldwell College
California State University, Bakersfield
California State University, Stanislaus
Carlow College
Central State University (Ohio)
Chatham College
CUNY-Brooklyn College
Claremont Colleges
Claremont McKenna College
Clark College
College of the Holy Cross
Des Moines Area Community College
Fisk University
Flaming Rainbow University
Fordham University
Hofstra University
Howard University
Johnson C. Smith University
Kentucky State University
Lafayette College
Loop College-City Colleges of Chicago
Manhattanville College
Mater Dei College
Memphis State University
Morningside College
Ohio University
Pace University
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Regis College
Rhode Island College
Roosevelt University
Rutgers-The State University of New Jersey
Saint Joseph's College
Shaw University
Smith College
SUNY-Buffalo
SUNY-Old Westbury
Stevens Institute of Technology
Stillman College
Tougaloo College
University of Alabama
University of Albuquerque
University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Cincinnati
University of Mississippi
University of Missouri, Medical School
University of Montevallo
University of Oklahoma
University of Tennessee
University of the Sacred Heart
University of Wisconsin
Ursuline College
Valencia Community College
Villanova University
Wabash College
Wake Forest University
Wheaton College
Whittier College
Wilmington College
Wilson College
Xavier University of Louisiana

Appendix B

MAP Advisory Board

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